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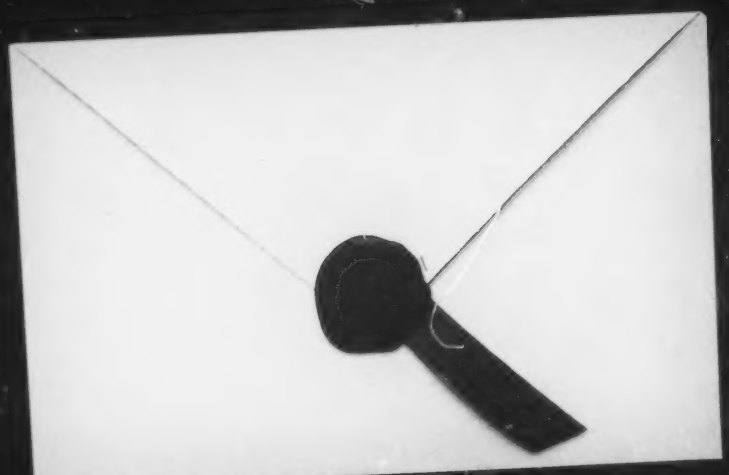

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Vol. 115 No. 16

Broadcasting Oct 17

Who's up, doc?... Candidate supporters—spin doctors—are on hand to give

reporters "right slant" on second and final presidential debate they had just witnessed. **PAGE 27.**

Wrapping up... It's down to wire on several communications issues now before 100th Congress, which is staying in session in hope that compromise on antidrug bill will emerge. **PAGE 29.**

Technology today and beyond... BROADCASTING's special report examines futures of new technologies being developed for broadcast and cable television and radio, including HDTV, fiber, automation and digital tape standards. **PAGE 35.**

28/**LIBEL THREAT**
Dukakis campaign responds with warning of libel suit against radio and print ads being run by National Rifle Association about candidate's position on gun ownership. Stations carrying advertisements are also told that they are not immune from legal action.

31/**STANDARD PROCEDURE**
NBC submits new HDTV standard—rival to 1,125/60 high-definition television system, which has long been de facto American standard.

32/**TARTIKOFF REUPS**
NBC programing whiz, Brandon Tartikoff, signs new multi-year contract with network that gives him more money and added programing responsibilities and production opportunities.

30/**SQUARE OFF**
FCC Commissioner James Quello and Chairman Dennis Patrick are divided over territorial limits on syndicated exclusivity. With those two at odds, it may be up to currently uncommitted Commissioner Patricia Diaz Dennis to settle issue.

54/**'LA BAMBA' PLUS**
Columbia Pictures Television begins its big promotional push for Columbia Showcase I, its latest film package, including such hits as "La Bamba," "Karate Kid II," "Stand By Me" and "Roxanne."

55/**GTG'S LATEST TINKERING**
GTG Entertainment brings in former managing editor of *Entertainment Tonight* to head its struggling *USA Today: The Television Show*.

53/**REAL PEOPLE**
Once populated with animated characters, children's programing increasingly is becoming domain of live-action formats built around such flesh-and-blood individuals as Pee

Wee Herman and Ed Grimley (played by comedian Martin Short, above). Included in changes are charges that Nielsen's peoplemeter system does not accurately reflect viewing by younger children.

56/**NETWORK EROSION**
One predicted fallout of 1988 writers' strike appears to be materializing: early returns suggest networks' combined viewership in prime time is off for first weeks of 1988-89 season.

66/**DROP OUTS**
United Cable, Turner Broadcasting and Home Box Office drop bid for European satllite service.

72/**ROLE CHANGE**
Former NCTA President Bob Schmidt speaks out for Wireless Cable Association.

74/**DIAL C FOR CABLE**
At 91st annual USTA meeting in New York, participants agree legislative-regulatory separation of delivery systems for telephone companies and cable carriers will be dissolved by year 2000—if not sooner.

95/**SHARING THE DREAM**
United Artists Entertainment's Stewart Blair has led that company through a period of bullish acquisition, in the process, trying to give his employes "a piece of the dream."

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Where Things Stand

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BY THE NUMBERS

Summary of broadcasting and cable

BROADCASTING

SERVICE	ON AIR	CP's[1]	TOTAL *
Commercial AM	4,915	278	5,193
Commercial FM	4,116	606	4,722
Educational FM	1,356	265	1,621
■ Total Radio	10,387	1,149	11,536
FM translators	1,625	439	2,064
Commercial VHF TV	543	19	562
Commercial UHF TV	506	205	711
Educational VHF TV	119	7	126
Educational UHF TV	214	29	243
■ Total TV	1,382	260	1,642
VHF LPTV	109	164	273
UHF LPTV	290	1,165	1,455
■ Total LPTV	399	1,329	1,728
VHF translators	3,060	109	3,169
UHF translators	2,198	338	2,536
ITFS[2]	250	114	364
Low-power auxiliary	824	0	824
TV auxiliary	7,430	205	7,635
UHF translator/boosters	6	0	6
Experimental TV	3	5	8
Remote pickup	12,338	53	12,391
Aural STL[3] & intercity relay	2,836	166	3,002

CABLE†

Total subscribers	47,042,000
Homes passed	73,900,000
Total systems	8,000
Household penetration†	52.8%
Pay cable penetration	32%

* Includes off-air licenses. † Penetration percentages are of TV household universe of 88.8 million. [1] Construction permit. [2] Instructional TV fixed service. [3] Studio-transmitter link.

■ *Solid box denotes items that have changed since last issue.*

AM-FM Allocations

NAB and other broadcast groups, in comments on FM translator inquiry, urged FCC to reject proposed expansion of service to allow for local origination by translators. Commission was asked to insure that rules establish translators as secondary services to fill in underserved areas of full-powered stations and not as "low-power FM" stations.

FCC received mixed reviews in comments on rulemaking to authorize FM's to use directional antennas and to permit allocation of stations in short-spaced positions. NAB was among those opposed, saying that an increase in FM directional antennas would lead to AM-ization of FM band. Some broadcast groups, however, favored providing more flexibility for FM broadcasters seeking suitable sites to locate transmission facilities. FCC has no plan to change table of FM allotments.

FCC asked for comment July 20 on two technical proposals to improve AM radio coverage through reduction of interference. Proposals were developed by National Radio Systems Committee (NRSC), joint National Association of Broadcasters-Electronic Industries Association effort. FCC is also seeking comment on proposals to allow class A stations to increase maximum power from 3 kw to 6 kw, proposed by New Jersey class A FM Broadcasters, and on counter proposal by NAB to allow 60% of class As to double power. NAB opposes New Jersey plan because of possible interference to class B and C FM's. FCC has also proposed intermediate C3 FM station class (25 kw maximum ERP, antenna height, 100 meters) for most of U.S.

Western hemisphere countries on June 2 concluded second and final session of conference to plan use of 100 khz of spectrum added to AM band that had ended at 1605 khz. FCC is in midst of inquiry designed to help it determine how to use 10 new channels. Commission has indicated some channels will be reserved for national licensees. Target for implementation of spectrum plan is July 1, 1990.

Cable Regulation

■ National Cable Television Association is trying to maintain status quo in cable regulation, much of which is based on Cable Act of 1984 and Copyright Act of 1976.

Motion picture industry and independent broadcasters have been pushing for stricter regulation of cable until there is more competition in delivering cable programing to homes. House Commerce Committee Chairman John

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White House Cabinet Committee on Cable looked at the media landscape of the future. With less than 15 years until the 21st century, perhaps it's time to do so again. But this time with an urgent recognition that America's stake in communications and information is directly related to both our economic and political future as a nation. This, I suggest, is what ought to be on top of the nation's public policy agenda to insure America's leadership in the global communications age.—*John M. Eger, former director, Office of Telecommunications Policy, now an international communications consultant.*

Fond farewell

EDITOR: On Oct. 7, 1988, at 5:30 p.m., WNBC(AM) New York left the airwaves—the culmination of a decision that was made almost 10 months ago to sell the NBC Radio stations.

I wish to express my thanks to the managers and staff at the station for their professionalism and their positive attitude; also to our many clients for their support, and to the WNBC air talent—their commitment and their dedication never waivered.

Heartfelt thanks to everyone who shared the last moment of WNBC Radio.—*Peg Kelly, vice president and general manager, WNBC(AM) New York.*

Strong on spots

EDITOR: It's been some time since a letter to your magazine suggested that a heavy spot load turns off listeners. But then we read the words of Stan Lichtenstein from Hayward, Calif. ("Open Mike," Sept. 26).

Stan says: "Listeners just won't listen to triple spot breaks and 20-plus commercial units per hour." Stan manages a noncommercial radio station. I own a commercial radio station.

Every bit of research I've seen indicates listeners like ads and lots of them. While driving across southern Minnesota recently, I caught three hours of Steve Cannon's highly listenable afternoon drive show on WCCO(AM) Minneapolis. During that time, I didn't hear one record. What I heard was interesting chatter, some humor, weather, news, sports and a ton of ads. The time flew.

Lichtenstein mentions KGO(AM) San Francisco as an exception to failing AM's. I add WCCO(AM), WGN(AM), KMOX(AM), WTMJ(AM) and probably thousands of others in small and medium markets across the country. All those stations carry a heavy spot load.

It's been my observation that the following are against a heavy spot load: traffic people, copywriters, programers, disk jockeys, station bookkeepers and, of course, Stan Lichtenstein and other noncommercial radio people.

The answer to AM and, as far as that goes, FM, is not to play one more record than the guy across town. It is to provide entertaining programing supported by a strong commercial schedule to pay the freight.—*Rick Charles, president and general manager, WRJG-AM-FM Mauston, Wis.*

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rating and a 33 share, followed by ABC's 10.7/18 and CBS's 9.8/17. In week two, NBC averaged a 17.5/30, while ABC scored a 12.3/21 and CBS an 11.2/19.

For the first two weeks of the new season, NBC is ahead with an 18.3/31, followed by ABC's 11.6/19 and CBS's 10.5/18. A year ago, after two weeks, NBC led with a 16.9/29, CBS was second with a 13.9/24, and ABC was a close third with a 13.5/23. Thus, after two weeks, NBC is up about 8% in rating, while ABC is down 17% and CBS is down 25%.

The level of homes using television for the first two weeks of the season is flat—59.2% this year, compared to 59.2% a year ago. Thus, with roughly the same number of homes tuning in, viewers continue to take advantage of alternative viewing options, including cable and syndicated programing on both independents and network affiliates.

Network executives tend to downplay the long-term impact of the strike on the medium, as do producers, who suggest that perhaps those suffering the most were the writers themselves, as well as the thousands of Hollywood community workers providing support services to the makers of films and television programs. "I don't predict any long-term erosion as a result of the strike," said Ted Harbert, vice president, prime time, ABC Entertainment. Early in the season, he suggested, there will likely be some "odd fluctuations" in viewing levels, depending on audience tuneouts of the many repeat shows, as well as acceptance or lack thereof of the fresh interim strike programing.

In the first week of the season, NBC took the top seven programs in prime time, all of them coverage of the summer games from Seoul. Six repeat comedies also made it into the top 20 shows of the week, as did one repeat movie, a one-hour drama repeat, an episode of *60 Minutes* and a *Monday Night Football* game. The highest-rated original entertainment show was *The Cavanaughs*, a comedy on CBS (canceled last season but brought back because of the strike), which ranked 20th. Two other series, designed as interim strike programing, CBS's *Live! Dick Clark Presents* and *First Impressions*, finished 43rd and 51st, respectively, out of a total of 52 prime time programs for the week.

For the short term—specifically, new shows debuting over the next two months—writing teams will be scrambling furiously to get scripts in final form. "Things are definitely not back to normal," said Patrick Faulstich, vice president, motion pictures for television and mini-series, CBS Entertainment. "Everyone was predicting a flood of material into the market" once the writers' strike was settled, he said, the assumption being that many writers would be slaving over their word processors at home while out of work.

In the case of some producers, the strike was a blessing in disguise. Grant Tinker, president, GTG Entertainment, offered that two of the three pilots his company produced for CBS, though picked up as series, were not up to the level of quality he wanted. They were *The Van Dyke Show*, scheduled to bow Wednesday, Oct. 26, at 8 p.m., and *Raising Miranda* (formerly known as *Close to Home*), slated to debut Saturday, Nov. 5, at 8:30 p.m. "We were not happy with either of those first efforts," said Tinker. "And we've gone back and started over, an opportunity we would not have had if not for the strike." □

Cable unit. MCA has formed a new division, MCA TV Entertainment, to produce original programing for basic and pay cable, as well as home video. The new unit will be headed by Tom Thayer, president; Ned Nalle, executive vice president, creative affairs; Jim Watters, executive vice president, production, and Bob Kelley, senior vice president, business affairs. The new division, based in Universal City, Calif., will oversee production of *The New Leave it to Beaver*, currently on Supertation WTBS(TV) Atlanta, as well as 10, two-hour made-for-TV movies for cable service, USA Network, which is one-half owned by MCA. The cable production unit will also oversee production of the new *Lassie* series, although it has not yet been determined where that show will be carried.

Week three goes to NBC; CBS takes news

The sort-of season continues; NBC took week three (ended Oct. 9) with a 15.0 rating and a 24.9 share. ABC came in second with a 13.4/22.8, and CBS closed out with a 12.4/20.7. That's a combined rating and share of 40.8 and 68.4, respectively—down from last year's combined closeout of 44.7/74.6. (The network particulars for that week were NBC, 16.1/27.1; CBS, 15.1/25.2, and ABC, 13.4/22.3.)

Part of the reason for the drop: The Wednesday evening broadcasts of the vice-presidential debates, which are unrated. ABC and NBC tied for first place with a 13.8 rating on Wednesday, down about 2.7 rating points each from last year's numbers. CBS, on the other hand, lost a full 7.6 rating points compared to its 15.0 rating for the night the year before. A repeat broadcast of a Bugs Bunny special at 8 p.m. (7.9/13) and a *Wiseguy* repeat (7.4/13) starting at 10:08 p.m. couldn't muster the audience against ABC's *Growing Pains* (11.2/20) and the second game of the National League playoffs (12.2/20), nor against NBC's repeat of a *Night Court* special (12.2/20) and an *Unsolved Mysteries* preview (14.9/25).

In addition, evening averages were down for most of the week. The low Wednesday night numbers pushed three out of the 21 possible evening averages (seven nights for three networks) down from a year ago. But of the remaining 18 possible chances for ratings improvements, only six came through.

ABC performed better this time on Monday night than a year ago, with *Burning Questions?* earning a 10.3/17 and *Monday Night Football* taking in an 18.1/31. NBC improved its Monday numbers with *ALF* (18.3/29), *Hogan Family* (18.1/28) and the made-for movie *The People Across the Lake* (17.3/27). Only CBS upped its evening average on Tuesday night with *High Risk* (13.5/22) and the TV movie *Jesse* (19.4/31), which ranked number six for the week. Only ABC did better on Thursday night, boosted to a 14.3/22.8 average by broadcasts of the second game, and pre-game show, of the American League playoffs. Friday night was worse for all three networks, while this season's Saturday night lineup on NBC gave the network a 17.3 rating for the night. Finally, ABC improved its Sunday night average, from a 12.4 to a 13.6, with the latter coming from a 16.1/27 average for game four of the National League playoffs, and from an 8.5/15 for the network's new *Incredible Sunday*.

The tally of nightly wins shows NBC taking Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and tying with ABC for Wednesday. CBS won Tuesday and Sunday. ABC settled for the Wednesday tie.

The news numbers for the week put CBS on top with a 10.2/20, over ABC's 9.9/21 and NBC's 9.6/20. Last year, it was CBS on top in news with an 11.4/23, over NBC's 9.5/20 and ABC's 9.2/18.

Nielsen	□	Net	□	Show
24	2/40	N		Cosby Show
22	7/36	N		Different World
21	6/37	N		Golden Girls
19	9/35	N		Empty Nest
19	8/31	N		Dear John
19	4/31	C		CBS Tuesday Movie
18	3/29	N		ALF
18	1/31	A		Monday Night Football
18	1/31	C		60 Minutes
18	1/28	N		Hogan Family
18	1/30	N		Tonight Show 26th Anni
17	3/27	N		NBC Monday Movie
16	9/30	N		Amen
16	6/26	C		CBS Sunday Movie
16	4/27	A		N.L. Playoffs, game 1
16	1/27	A		N.L. Playoffs, game 4
15	6/24	C		Murder, She Wrote
15	4/29	N		Hunter
15	1/24	C		CBS Monday Movie
15	0/25	N		NBC Sunday Movie
14	9/25	A		A.L. Playoffs, game 2
14	9/22	N		Super Bloopers and Jokes
23	14.9/25	N		Unsolved Mysteries
24	14.7/27	N		227
25	14.5/26	N		NBC Friday Movie
26	13.5/22	C		High Risk
27	12.5/23	A		A.L. Playoffs, game 3
28	12.2/28	A		N.L. Playoffs, game 2
29	12.2/20	N		Night Court, special
30	12.0/20	C		CBS Thursday Movie
31	11.8/21	A		N.L. Playoffs, pregame 1
32	11.3/20	A		Growing Pains
33	11.3/21	N		Sonny Spoon, preview
34	10.9/20	C		Seven Wonders-Circus
35	10.6/17	N		Magical World of Disney
36	10.3/18	A		A.L. Playoffs, pregame 2
37	10.3/17	A		Burning Questions?
38	10.2/17	A		N.L. Playoffs, pregame 4
39	9.5/18	A		20/20
40	9.5/17	C		CBS Friday Movie
41	9.5/15	C		Newhart
42	9.4/15	F		America's Most Wanted
43	9.1/16	A		N.L. Playoffs, pregame 3
44	9.0/16	A		Mr. Belvedere
45	9.0/17	C		West 57th
46	8.8/14	C		48 Hours
47	8.7/14	N		Summer Olympics Review
48	8.5/17	A		A.L. Playoffs, pregame 3
49	8.5/16	A		Full House
50	8.5/15	A		Incredible Sunday
51	8.5/17	A		N.L. Playoffs, pregame 3
52	7.9/13	C		Bugs Bunny: Conn. Rabbit
53	7.9/12	C		Cavanaughs
54	7.4/14	A		Perfect Strangers
55	7.4/13	C		Wiseguy
56	7.4/11	F		Married... With Children
57	7.3/13	C		Simon and Simon
58	6.1/10	F		21 Jump Street
59	5.8/10	C		Live! Dick Clark Presents
60	3.8/6	F		Gary Shandling Show
61	3.7/7	F		Reporters
62	3.5/5	F		Tracey Ullman Show
63	3.1/5	F		Beyond Tomorrow
64	2.5/4	F		Duet

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